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OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

August 8, 2012

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VIA HAND DELIVERY

Jeff S. Jordan, Supervisory Attorney
Complaint Examination & Legal Administration
Federal Election Commission
999 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20463

Re: MUR 6590

Reference Number

031982.00002

Dear Mr. Jordan:

On behalf of the Columbus Metropolitan Club ("CMC" or "the Club"), we submit this response to the complaint filed by Mark R. Brown in MUR 6590. For the reasons set forth below, the Federal Election Commission should find that there is no reason to believe that the Club violated any provision of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 ("FECA" or "the Act"), as amended, or applicable Federal Election Commission ("FEC" or "the Commission") regulations.

I. Summary of Allegations

Despite acknowledging that the forum on presidential politics in Ohio that the CMC held May 23, 2012 was not a "debate" within the meaning of 11 C.F.R. § 110.13, Mr. Brown, "a registered voter in Ohio who routinely votes for qualified minor party candidates" and intends to do so in November 2012, devotes 20 paragraphs of his 59 paragraph submission complaining, in

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effect, that minor party officials were improperly excluded from the forum. Complaint at 7-10, ¶¶ 30-49. Because this argument is simply spurious, Mr. Brown seeks to have the Commission punish the CMC for excluding minor party officials from the forum by alleging that the forum constituted an illegal contribution to the campaigns of President Obama and Governor Romney. Complaint at 1, ¶ 1. Similar baseless allegations against the CMC have been raised and rejected by the Commission twice before. *Sae generally* MURs 5642 and 6111.

In addition, Mr. Brown alleges that the dissemination of the video of the forum by the Ohio News Network ("ONN") and the posting of the forum video on CMC's YouTube page are illegal corporate contributions because they constitute "something of value" contributed to the Ohio Democratic and Republican Parties and their respective candidates' campaigns. Brown Complaint at 2, 11, ¶¶ 2, 58. These claims are simply unfounded. No corporate funds were used to video the May 23, 2012 forum or post the video on the CMC's YouTube page. Moreover, the ONN broadcast of the May 23, 2012 forum was clearly permissible under the press exemption. 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.73 and 100.132.

For all of the reasons discussed below, Mr. Brown's allegations are incorrect as a matter of law.

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II. Statement of Facts and Discussion of Authority

There is to no reason to believe that the Club committed any violation of FECA or FEC implementing regulations in sponsoring the May 23, 2012 forum that is the subject of MUR 6590.

A. CMC's Forum on Presidential Politics in Ohio Does Not Constitute an Illegal Corporate Contribution or Expenditure

1. Mr. Brown's Complaint Misinterprets FECA as Prohibiting Political Speech by Corporations in Cooperation with Party Officials

Mr. Brown's complaint misinterprets FECA and the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, 558 U.S. 50 (2010) as a blanket prohibition on all corporate political speech if it is made in cooperation with party officials.¹ Under Mr. Brown's interpretation of the Act, a nonprofit corporation is barred from sponsoring a public, educational forum on the important role the State of Ohio will play in the 2012 presidential campaign if the forum includes party officials. The Act simply does not reach that far, nor could it and remain consistent with the First Amendment. In fact, Congress and the FEC have exempted various types of corporate political speech, including non-profit sponsored debates, candidate appearances on the campuses of incorporated nonprofit educational institutions, communications made on the Internet by

¹ Mr. Brown seems entirely unaware of the steps the Commission has taken to implement *Citizens United*. Throughout Mr. Brown's complaint, he relies on 11 C.F.R. § 114.4. Following *Citizens United*, however, the Commission acknowledged that the restrictions on corporate political speech in 11 C.F.R. § 114.4 were constitutionally suspect and indicated that the Commission would conduct a rulemaking to bring 11 C.F.R. § 114.4 in line with the Supreme Court decision. *FEC Statement on the Supreme Court's Decision in Citizens United v. FEC* (Feb. 5, 2010), <http://www.fec.gov/press/press2010/20100205CitizensUnited.shtml>. That rulemaking was initiated on December 27, 2011 and is still pending. Independent Expenditures and Electioneering Commc'ns by Corps. and Labor Orgs., 76 Fed. Reg. 80,807-12 (Dec. 27, 2011) (notice of proposed rulemaking).

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incorporated bloggers (the "Internet Rule"), and news coverage of campaigns by for-profit media corporations. All of these protected forms of corporate political speech can and frequently do involve cooperation with federal candidates and/or federal or state party officials. Therefore, FECA cannot be interpreted to prohibit all corporate political speech made in cooperation with party officials as Mr. Brown contends.

First, FECA specifically excludes from the definition of the term "expenditure" any "nonpartisan activity designed to encourage individuals to vote or to register to vote." 2 U.S.C. § 431(9)(B)(ii). The Commission has consistently held that this provision provides a safe harbor for non-profit organizations that stage candidate debates in accordance with FEC regulations. See MUR 5378 (Commission on Presidential Debates), First General Counsel's Report at 2-3; MURs 4987, 5004, 5021 (Commission on Presidential Debates), First General Counsel's Report at 5-6. Specifically, if the non-profit organization staging the debate meets the requirements of 11 C.F.R. § 110.13(a)(1) and stages debates in accordance with 11 C.F.R. §§ 110.13(b) and (c) and 114.4(f), the organization's activities are exempt from FECA's definitions of "contribution" and "expenditure." MUR 5378, First General Counsel's Report at 3. This exemption demonstrates that FECA cannot be read to prohibit all political speech made by corporations in cooperation with party officials.

Second, FEC regulations contain an exemption from the definition of "contribution or expenditure" for candidate appearances at incorporated nonprofit educational institutions. 11

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C.F.R. § 114.4(c)(7); *see also* MUR 5642 (Columbus Metropolitan Club), First General

Counsel's Report at 22, n.25. The Commission explained that this regulation enables:

[P]rivate colleges, universities, and other incorporated nonprofit educational institutions [to] make their premises available to candidates who wish to address students, faculty, the academic community, or the general public (whomever is invited) at no cost or for less than the usual and normal charge. However, the school must make reasonable efforts to ensure that the appearances are conducted as speeches, question and answer sessions, or other academic events, and do not constitute campaign rallies.

Explanation and Justification, Corporate and Labor Organization Activity; Express Advocacy and Coordination with Candidates, 60 Fed. Reg. 64260, 64270 (Dec. 14, 1995). This exemption is yet another instance where the Commission has interpreted FECA to allow corporate political speech in cooperation with federal candidates and party officials, demonstrating that the Act was not intended to, nor does it have the effect of, prohibiting all corporate speech in cooperation with party officials, as Mr. Brown would have the Commission believe.

Indeed, the Commission has taken note of this exemption in a prior enforcement case involving the CMC. *See* MUR 5642, First General Counsel's Report at 22, n.25. Although the Club is not a school, college, or university, the Commission relied on this exemption to exercise its prosecutorial discretion in MUR 5642 and declined to pursue allegations that the CMC had made an impermissible corporate political expenditure under 2 U.S.C. § 441b by sponsoring a forum where Mr. George Soros appeared to discuss the Iraq War and opposed the re-election of President George W. Bush. *Id.* Despite neither taking place on the premises of an educational

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institution nor including a candidate appearance, the Commission wrote that "some of the policy considerations that led to the creation of this exemption, including ensuring that FECA did not unduly burden the free exchange and debate of ideas in an intellectual environment, would seem to support the exercise of prosecutorial discretion in these circumstances." *Id.* (citing Explanation and Justification, Corporate and Labor Organization Activity, Express Advocacy and Coordination with Candidates, 60 Fed. Reg. 64260, 64270-71 (Dec. 14, 1995)). The Commission's reasoning in MUR 5642 resonates with even stronger force here where the purpose of the forum was to discuss the State of Ohio's role in the 2012 presidential election rather than debate the merits of the candidates in that race.

The Internet Rule is a third example of the Commission interpreting FECA to specifically allow an incorporated entity to engage in political speech in cooperation with party officials. The Internet Rule exempts from the Commission's definitions of "contribution" and "expenditure" activities on the Internet "for the purpose of influencing a Federal election" by a "corporation that is wholly owned by one or more individuals, that engages primarily in Internet activities, and that does not derive a substantial portion of its revenues from sources other than income from its Internet activities." 11 C.F.R §§ 100.94(d), 100.155(d). The Internet activities include emails, blogging, maintaining a website, and "any other form of communication distributed over the Internet." 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.94(b), 100.155(b). Most importantly, the Internet Rule applies to Internet activities by incorporated bloggers even if they are done "in coordination with any

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candidate, authorized committee, or political party committee.” 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.94(a), 100.155(a).

Finally, FECA also contains an exemption for political speech by for-profit news media corporations. FECA and FEC regulations exempt “Any cost incurred in covering or carrying a news story, commentary, or editorial by any broadcasting station (including a cable television operator, programmer or producer) . . .” from the definition of contribution or expenditure. 2 U.S.C. § 431(9)(B)(i); 11 C.F.R. § 100.73; 11 C.F.R. § 100.132. The Commission has given the exemption for for-profit media corporations an extremely broad interpretation. *See, e.g.*, Advisory Opinion 2011-11 (Stephen Colbert).

Accordingly, it is clear that FECA and FEC regulations specifically allow both non-profit and for-profit corporations to engage in certain types of political speech in cooperation with party officials in order not to “unduly burden the free exchange and debate of ideas.” MUR 5642 (Columbus Metropolitan Club), First General Counsel’s Report at 22, n.25. Accordingly, Mr. Brown’s interpretation of FECA and FEC regulations as creating a complete prohibition on corporate political speech in cooperation with party officials is simply incorrect.

2. CMC Did Not Endorse a Candidate or Use Corporate Funds to Pay for the Forum, and Neither Party Official Expressly Advocated the Election of Either Party’s Presidential Candidate

Since its inception, the Club has worked to remain completely neutral with regard to programming and does not advertise, promote, endorse or otherwise advocate or oppose any

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person, candidate, position, or ideology. *See, e.g.*, Affidavit of Jane Scott, Executive Director, Columbus Metropolitan Club at ¶ 8 (Attachment 1 to the CMC Response to the Complaint in MUR 5642)(hereinafter "Scott Affidavit"). In keeping with this long-standing policy, CMC did not endorse either Barack Obama or Mitt Romney at the May 23, 2012 forum and no representative of the Club endorsed any of the views expressed by either of the party officials before, during, or after the May 23, 2012 forum.

The Columbus Metropolitan Club is a very small 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with a total of four full- and part-time employees and an annual budget of \$500,000. The Club was established in 1976 to promote the open exchange of information and ideas among the residents of central Ohio by providing a forum for free expression and fair debate to examine the many issues confronting the community, state, nation, and world. Scott Affidavit at ¶¶ 3-5. The Club provides the opportunity for discussion and debate among various viewpoints and constituencies through regularly scheduled luncheon forums. *Id.* at ¶ 6. In the past year, the Club planned and hosted 58 events attended by a total of almost 8,000 people. Nearly 200 local, regional, national and international speakers discussed health, art, politics, international relations, the economy, business, social needs, civil liberties, and other newsworthy topics. The Club describes itself as "the office water cooler, the neighborhood coffee shop, the sports bar during a big game, the kitchen table at suppertime." *About Us: CMC is the Community's Conversation*, <http://columbusmetroclub.org/Default.aspx?pageId=49309>. "[The Club is] where we look forward to seeing our family and friends to share important news, discuss it, debate it, and mull

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over its ramifications for ourselves, our neighbors, our community and our world." *Id.* Women excluded from the private lunch clubs and speaker groups in the area founded CMC, recruiting members from all walks of life, opening membership to everyone, and providing a "unique opportunity for community conversation." *CMC: History*, <http://columbusmetroclub.org/Default.aspx?pagelid=49311>.

The facts demonstrate that the Club did not schedule the May 23, 2012 forum to provide either party official with a platform from which to advocate the election of their respective presidential candidates. Instead, the Club scheduled both state party chairs to provide context and analysis of the 2012 presidential electoral landscape, continuing in CMC's proud tradition of promoting the open exchange of information and ideas among the residents of central Ohio. The Club's promotional materials for the May 23, 2012 forum do not include either the images or the names of either presidential candidate, contain no express advocacy, and advertise the forum as "a glimpse [of] what to expect in Ohio this upcoming presidential election season." *See Presidential Politics in O-H-I-O*, DAILY REPORTER, May 16, 2012 (attached hereto as Exhibit A).

Nor is there any basis in fact for anyone to believe that, by sponsoring the May 23, 2012 forum, the Club somehow endorsed either speaker's political views. The Club strives to remain completely neutral and has established procedures designed to prevent even the perception that the Club is endorsing any person, candidate, position, or ideology. Scott Affidavit at ¶ 8. These

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long-standing procedures were followed to the letter on May 23, 2012. Rich Terapak, President of the CMC Board of Trustees, was given a CMC-staff-prepared neutral script, which introduced the speakers alphabetically, to use at the beginning and end of the forum. After briefly discussing both speakers' bios, Mr. Terapak introduced the moderator for the discussion, Michael Thompson, News Director of WOSU (a public radio station in Ohio), who asked his own and facilitated audience questions to both party officials.

Furthermore, no corporate funds were used to pay for the May 23, 2012 forum. The forum was fully paid for using funds derived from ticket sales to Club members and the general public. All CMC forums are funded in this way. Scott Affidavit at ¶¶ 25-26; see also Affidavit of Lori Marlow at ¶ 18 (Attachment 7 to the CMC Response to the Complaint in MUR 5642)(hereinafter "Marlow Affidavit"). The Club uses the same procedure for selling tickets to all Club forums. Marlow Affidavit at ¶ 18. CMC members and members of the general public must reserve tickets to a forum and must pay for their tickets by check, cash, or credit card in advance of the forum. *Id.* Following an event, the Club processes the credit card charges, and the cash and checks are deposited. *Id.* When the Club receives an invoice from the facility where an event was held, the Club sends a check to that facility, drawing on the funds that event's ticket sales generated. *Id.*

The process of paying for the May 23, 2012 forum was no different. Approximately 139 individuals attended the May 23, 2012 forum and ticket sales generated \$2,740. The venue, the

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Athletic Club of Columbus (the "Athletic Club"), charged CMC a total of \$2,080 for the use of their facilities for the May 23, 2012 forum. The Athletic Club invoice for the forum was paid exclusively with the funds generated by ticket sales. Ticket sale revenue to the forum more than covered both the direct and indirect costs of holding the forum at the Athletic Club. In fact, the revenue from ticket sales to the May 23, 2012 forum covered the entire cost of the forum, including indirect administration and marketing, as well as the costs of filming the forum, providing it the Ohio News Network, and posting it on the website.

In addition, while both party officials discussed the 2012 presidential election, they did not expressly advocate the election of either Barack Obama or Mitt Romney. Mr. Brown's complaint makes this fact abundantly clear. He quotes local news stories, one of which reported that "the chairmen spent most of their time before the [CMC] talking national politics," and the other wrote that the moderator "quizzed" the speakers. Complaint at 4, ¶¶ 14-15. The complaint notes that the Democratic Party official indicated he was happy with the President as his candidate and that "we should all celebrate that [more Ohioans are working today than there were in January 2009]." Complaint at 5, ¶ 21. Mr. Brown further notes that the Republican Party official indicated he thought the bailout of General Motors was a "bad idea" and that he was pleased with Mitt Romney, who will be able to "attract a number of independents." *Id.* at 4-5, ¶¶ 18-19. These innocuous bits of political analysis in the context of a general discussion of the role the State of Ohio would play in the 2012 presidential election hardly constitute "express advocacy" as defined by Commission regulations. 11 C.F.R. § 100.22(a)&(b).

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In brief, CMC did not endorse either presidential candidate and did nothing to imply that the Club endorsed the views of either party official. In keeping with its long-standing policy of neutrality, the Club took no position on either candidate, used a neutral script to introduce both speakers, had a local member of the media moderate the discussion by asking and facilitating audience questions, and used no corporate funds to host the May 23, 2012 forum. In addition, neither speaker expressly advocated the election of Barack Obama or Mitt Romney.

Simply put, the May 23, 2012 forum organized by the Columbus Metropolitan Club did not constitute a contribution or expenditure prohibited by 2 U.S.C. § 441b to either the Democratic or Republican Parties or the campaigns of their presumptive nominees. Accordingly, there is no reason to believe that the CMC violated FECA or FEC regulations when it hosted the May 23, 2012 forum to discuss the 2012 presidential election.

B. Making the May 23, 2013 Forum on Presidential Politics in Ohio Available to the Ohio News Network Did Not Violate FECA or FEC Regulations

The Ohio News Network is a cable news channel based in Columbus, Ohio, calling itself "Ohio's channel for news." *Ohio News Network*, <http://www.onntv.com/>. ONN features programs such as "Ohio & Company," "Buckeye Blitz," and "Ohio's 9 O'clock News." *Id.* ONN operates on four cable providers, and has a website featuring news, weather, sports, health, and Ohio politics, among other subjects. *Id.* The Ohio politics portion of the site includes articles and video focused on the 2012 presidential election. ONN, *Ohio Politics*, <http://www.onntv.com/content/sections/politics/index.html>.

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Commission regulations excluding "any cost incurred in covering or carrying a news story, commentary or editorial by any broadcasting station (including a cable television operator, programmer or producer) . . . unless the facility is owned or controlled by any political party, political committee, or candidate" from the definition of "contribution" or "expenditure" are known collectively as the "press exemption." 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.73 and 100.132. The regulations derive from FECA. See 2 U.S.C. § 431(9)(B)(i). The Commission, in explaining the legislative history of the press exemption, wrote "Congress did not intend to 'limit or burden in any way the First Amendment freedom[] of the press [The exemption] assures the unfettered right of newspapers, TV networks, and other media to cover and comment on political campaigns.'" Advisory Opinion 2011-11 (Colbert) at 6 (quoting H.R. REP. NO. 93-1239, at 4 (1974)) (alterations in original).

The courts have interpreted the press exemption broadly to preclude any Commission investigation of press activities that fall within the scope of the exemption. *Reader's Digest Ass'n v. FEC*, 509 F. Supp. 1210, 1214 (S.D.N.Y. 1981); *FEC v. Phillips Publ'g, Inc.*, F. Supp. 1308, 1312 (D.D.C. 1981). Accordingly, the Commission is limited to "determining whether the press exemption is applicable." *Reader's Digest*, 509 F. Supp. at 1214. In determining whether the press exemption applies, the Commission first asks whether the entity engaging in the activity is a press entity. Advisory Opinion 2011-11 at 6. If so, the Commission asks: "(A) whether the entity is owned or controlled by a political party, political committee, or candidate; and (B) whether the entity is acting as a press entity in conducting the activity at issue (i.e.,

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whether the press entity is acting in its "legitimate press function")." *Id.* at 6-7; see *Reader's Digest*, 509 F. Supp. at 1214. In this matter, the Ohio News Network is clearly a press entity; it is not owned or controlled by a political party, committee, or candidate; and it engaged in legitimate press activity in broadcasting the May 23, 2012 forum. The Ohio News Network, therefore, qualifies under the press exemption and the CMC did not violate FECA or FEC regulations by providing ONN with video of the May 23, 2012 forum.

The Ohio News Network, a cable TV channel, is undoubtedly a press entity. Operating on four separate cable providers and maintaining a regularly updated website, ONN is a quintessential member of the press. Both the Act and Commission regulations specify that the press exemption is available to "a cable television operator, programmer or producer," 2 U.S.C. § 431(9)(B)(i); 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.73 and 100.132, and FEC regulations extend the Act to include "web site[s]." 11 C.F.R. §§ 100.73 and 100.132.

In Advisory Opinion 2004-07, Viacom asked the Commission to consider whether MTV's "Prelection" activities would constitute "corporate contributions, expenditures, or electioneering communications." Advisory Opinion 2004-07 at 3. Prelection was designed as a voter education initiative with a multiplicity of tools for young people to learn about presidential candidates in 2004, including a simulated vote. See *id.* at 1-2. The Commission found that Viacom's "broadcasting of Prelection activities constitutes 'covering or carrying a news story, commentary, or editorial,' and thus falls within the exemptions in 2 U.S.C. [§§] 431(9)(B)(i) and

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434(f)(3)(B)(i) and would not violate 2 U.S.C. [§] 441b. Advisory Opinion 2004-07 at 5. In MUR 6590, the Ohio News Network broadcast video of the May 23, 2012 forum on its cable channel. The May 23, 2012 forum, broadcast by ONN Sunday at 1:00 pm, provided information for Ohioans about the 2012 presidential election, mirroring the Commission-approved MTV's Prelection activities. In addition, the Ohio News Network is surely the type of organization Congress meant to exempt when it created the press exemption to "assure[] the unfettered right of newspapers, TV networks, and other media to cover and comment on political campaigns." H.R. REP. NO. 93-1239, at 4 (1974). Nor is there any reason to believe, and Mr. Brown does not allege, that the Ohio News Network is either owned or "controlled by a political party, political committee, or candidate." See Advisory Opinion 2011-11 at 7.

Finally, ONN was carrying out its "legitimate press function" when it broadcast video from the May 23, 2012 forum. See Advisory Opinion 2011-11 at 7. The broadcast did not result in ONN's "active participation in core campaign or electioneering functions." *Id.* at 8. Furthermore, under the "considerations of form" analysis the Commission uses from *Massachusetts Citizens for Life*, 479 U.S. 238, 251 (1986) it is clear that the Ohio News Network operated in its normal and legitimate press function when it broadcast video of the May 23, 2012 forum, as ONN has routinely broadcast comparable political video on its channel and its website. See ONN, *Ohio Politics*, <http://www.onntv.com/content/sections/politics/index.html>; see also Advisory Opinion 2011-11 at 8 (comparing Colbert Report segment production and distribution.

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for his independent expenditure committee with previously aired segments on the Colbert Report).

These facts demonstrate that the Ohio News Network is a press entity to which the press exemption applies and the CMC did not violate FECA or FEC regulations by providing ONN with video of the May 23, 2012 forum.

Conclusion

Mr. Brown's flawed complaint against the Columbus Metropolitan Club provides no basis for the Commission to conclude that there is reason to believe that the Club violated FECA or FEC implementing regulations. Mr. Brown's principal complaint seems to be that the Club held a forum to which officials of independent and minor parties were not invited. In an attempt to punish the Club for this perceived injustice, Mr. Brown alleges that CMC provided the presidential campaigns of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney and the Democratic and Republican Parties of Ohio with illegal corporate contributions. He distorts FECA, incorrectly implying that it prohibits any corporate political speech made in cooperation with party officials. The May 23, 2012 forum simply does not constitute a corporate contribution within the meaning of FECA and FEC regulations. No corporate funds were used to pay the costs of the May 23, 2012 forum. The Club did not endorse any candidate for federal office, nor did it endorse the views of either party official who spoke at the forum. Neither party official expressly advocated the election of Barack Obama or Mitt Romney during the forum. Finally, the Ohio News Network properly

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broadcast CMC-provided video of the May 23, 2012 forum on their channel under the press exemption.

For the reasons stated above, the Commission should find that there is no reason to believe that the Columbus Metropolitan Club violated any provision of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971, as amended, or applicable Federal Election Commission regulations.

Sincerely,



Brett G. Kappel
Counsel for the Columbus Metropolitan Club

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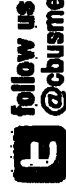
Exhibit A

2000 COLUMBUS★ metropolitan Club

Wednesday, May 16, 2012
Available online at thedailyreporteronline.com

the community's conversation
100 east broad street suite 100 columbus, ohio 43215

All CMC forums are
open to everyone!
Reservations required.



614-464-3220

columbusmetroclub.org

CMC's mission is to connect people and ideas through community conversation.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23

Presidential Politics in O-H-I-O

For Ohioans, closed streets and barricades extend beyond the construction season, they're also part of the national election season. With Ohio continuing to be a key swing state, there is the expectation of multiple visits from both presidential candidates between now and the November election. As Ohioans, it gives us a small sense of pride that to get the extra attention, but what makes Ohio so important to the national electoral scene?

Long-time "politician" and state chairmen of their respective parties, Democrat Chris Redfern and Republican Bob Bennett will share the stage for a discussion moderated by WOSU Public Media's news director Mike Thompson at the May 23 CMC luncheon forum.

How do the state party organizations work with the national election committees?

With limited time (although it seems like forever), where are the political operatives directing their efforts? The superpacs of 2012 will be sending their own messages about issues, candidates and parties, but will this unlimited influx of money change the political game?

The stakes are high in Ohio, especially for Bob Bennett since a Republican has never won a presidential election without winning Ohio. Following a recent shake-up in the Ohio GOP leadership, Bennett is serving as chairman again, after a three-year break. Previously he held that position as the longest-serving chairman of the Ohio Republican Party, leading the organization from 1988-2009.

A former Ohio State Representative in the 80th district, Redfern has been chair of the Ohio Democratic Party since 2005.

THIS WEEK AT CMC

WEDNESDAY, MAY 16

The Making of Nationwide Children's Hospital's New Campus

Board Chair Abigail Wiener and CEO Steve Allen with interviewer Jamie Hawes, editor, *Columbus Parent*. Go behind the scenes of this nation's largest pediatric expansion prior to its June opening!

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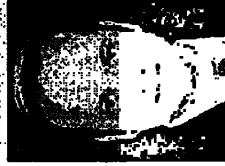
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Ohio Republican
Party Chairman
Bob Bennett



Ohio Democratic
Party Chairman
Chris Redfern



Host
Mike Thompson,
News Director,
WOSU Public Media

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His leadership strategy has been to gain voters in all 88 Ohio counties, not just concentrating on specific types or geography of voters but on all Ohioans.

The boxing gloves may be off to the side of the podium but Bennett and Redfern will have their "game on." This CMC forum promises to offer a glimpse what to expect in Ohio this upcoming presidential election season.